

**Special Meeting
Joint City Commission/County Commission
School Board Meeting
June 2, 2005**

The School Board of Leon County, Florida, met in special joint session with members of the City Commission and County Commission at 5:00 p.m. on June 2, 2005 at City Hall, Tallahassee, Florida. Present were Board Members Ms. Sheila Costigan, Chair; Mr. Fred Varn, Vice Chair; Ms. Maggie B. Lewis; Mr. Dee Crumpler; and Ms. Joy Bowen; the Superintendent and Ex-Officio Secretary, Mr. William J. Montford; Mayor John Marks and City Commissioners Mr. Allan Katz, Ms. Debbie Lightsey, Mr. Mark Mustian and Mr. Andrew Gillum; and County Commissioners Ms. Jane Sauls, Mr. Tony Grippa, Mr. Ed DePuy, Mr. Bob Ratcliff, Mr. Cliff Thaell and Mr. Dan Winchester. Superintendent Bill Montford presided.

A. INTRODUCTIONS: Superintendent Montford noted that introductions were not necessary.

B. AGENDA MODIFICATIONS:

Commissioner Lightsey stated that she had received information regarding a change in school board policy whereby school playgrounds and recreational facilities can be locked so that people in the neighborhood don't have access to them. She said that this practice, which was left up to the principal, was reducing the parks/playgrounds available to the public. She stated that she would like to have this added so that it could get cleared up.

Commissioner Grippa asked that the Ft. Braden Community Center and the Concord School be added to the agenda. He noted that he, too, was interested in the item Commissioner Lightsey introduced.

Commissioner Sauls also requested an update on Old Fort Braden School.

Commissioner Gillum requested an update on the school crossing guards to include the possibility of cost sharing and a raise for the crossing guards.

Board Member Lewis asked to add discussion on a new high school/technology/work force school for the Southside.

Superintendent Montford reviewed the items added and noted that along with the Ft. Braden/Concord discussion, we could also add other available property of the school system, as well as city and county government that may be available to giving away, swapping or selling.

C. AGENDA ITEM GENERALLY AFFECTING SCHOOL PLANNING.

1. Summary of 2005 Growth Management legislation. Superintendent Montford introduced Mr. Goodrow and Mr. Young of the Tallahassee-Leon County Planning Department who gave a brief overview of the Growth Management Plan. It was noted that the plan requires school concurrency and a financially feasible plan and CIE (Capital Improvements Element).

The City and the County now have to incorporate the School Board's Capital Facilities Plan into the Comprehensive Plan CIE. Also required is an Interlocal Agreement which we already have, but it is going to have to be changed based on some of the provisions in the new Growth Management Legislation. A public schools element also has to be included in the Comprehensive Plan. Also encouraged is a community vision in the urban services boundary. School facilities will have to be addressed within the urban services boundary. Also required is a proportionate fair share mitigation of development impacts. There will be provisions where a development can mitigate and get out of being stopped by school concurrency. That piece will have to be designed and prepared as part of the Comprehensive Plan. It was explained that if you do not have capacity at a school, and it is not in the 5-year plan, you cannot go forward with a development, however, you can mitigate by paying a fair share amount of money or donating land (there are various provisions) and then move forward. This cannot be done unless the school facility actually appears in the CIP (Capital Improvement Plan) in the future if it's over capacity. It also allows for going to a 10 Year Capital Facilities schedule which also has to be financially feasible (the monies have to be available or it must be reasonably projected where they will come from). Under the Funding Provisions, there are \$105 million in recurring dollars state-wide for school facilities, \$71.65 million in non-recurring dollars this year, a high-growth funding program which Leon County schools does not qualify for, and a provision for further State analysis. A Century Commission has been created and will be appointed, that will continually, over a period of years, look at the Growth Management Legislation and come back annually and make recommendations to the Legislature and the Governor. There is also a School Concurrency Task Force that has to look at the school concurrency issue and come back to the Governor and the Legislature before the next session with recommendations.

Superintendent Montford noted that with the new Class Size Amendment limiting the amount of students that can be put into the classroom, this upcoming school year is the last year that the class size is calculated on a district-wide basis (which LCS meets today).

The class-size average for the district this year is fine, however beginning in 2006 in Florida it will be determined on a school-by-school basis. Under that criteria and based on today's enrollment, some of our schools will not meet the criteria. Board Member Dee Crumpler added that in 2010 district across the state will be required to meet the Class Size Amendment by class at each school. Commissioner Thael asked staff if the new law would preclude then, hypothetically, a local government prohibiting an increase in density on a property that would contribute to the over capacity of a school or if it would prohibit local government approving a site plan for developing on that property? Also, if a comp plan is approved increasing density, but we're not allowed by the new Growth Management Law to approve a site plan, would that put the local government in some kind of legal jeopardy for taking under the Bert Harris laws? It was answered that what the provisions provide for, absent mitigation by a development, a development cannot be approved where there is a school that is at or over capacity. The provisions word it as a development order, which broadly could include a land use changes as well as a building permit. It was noted that until the rules are written, it is not clear what is meant. Commissioner Ratcliff stated that the discussion vindicates the approach that the two commissions have taken to encourage more infill, discourage sprawl and to redirect growth back into the middle of the urban center where there already is school capacity. He stated that in the past schools had to chase sprawl instead of having residential growth where there already is school capacity along with the other forms of public infrastructure.

Commissioner Ratcliff said that he was very encouraged by the new State law and that it put some teeth into the strategy that we need to develop more fully. Commissioner Grippa noted that some of the downtown development, Tennyson for instances, was located in a school zone that was currently overcapacity, so the argument did not hold true. He noted that this group of elected officials needed to work together to deal with this issue. His expressed his support for condo and residential going up downtown, but noted that he also like to see children able to go to public school downtown and that he looked forward to working on those issues with the school system. Commissioner Ratcliff remarked that all of the Southside schools were under enrolled and that there were promising possibilities for people who live and work in the urban center. Commissioner Gillum asked if the legislation means that if a school is at or above capacity it would mean that development couldn't be approved or considered. The answers was that the developer would have to mitigate and that procedures, rules, and criteria would have to be developed for mitigating (this could include payment of money, dedication of land, or buying a portable for the school). It was noted that there were many things that could be done and that standards would have to be developed. It was also noted that this cannot be done if the project they are impacting doesn't appear on at least the 10 year capital facilities schedule of improvements by the school board. If it doesn't appear on there and it's over capacity, there is nothing they can do. Commissioner Katz stated that it's important that it is recognized that there are implications, but that it's way too early to leap in with solutions because we don't even know how the problems are going to be outlined. He noted that many people approved the Class Size Amendment, but that there is going to be a price for that and that we are beginning to understand what that is. Local government people are going to hopefully have some input into what the State does and that next year the Legislature will probably implement some "glitch" bill and that we need to communicate with our local delegation with our concerns regarding what we are trying to do in this community and get their assistance. Mayor Marks asked if Leon County was over capacity in the school district itself. The answer was no. He suggested that adjusting the boundary lines for the schools would address the over capacity at some of the school and well as further development of the Southside. Board Member Varn asked how the new law would affect pending applications for developments. It was noted that apparently there would be a 5-year period in which only the district-wide capacity had to be looked at. After that it would be school by school capacity. Mr. Varn also noted that one of the problems the School Board deals with is the growth in the Northeast. He stated that Chiles High School will be the most populated high school in the entire county next year and that most of the students attend within a 5 mile radius. He asked if Mayor Marks was suggesting taking a student who lives 5.1 miles from the school and moving them to another school. Mayor Marks responded that it was something that needed to be looked at because there is capacity district-wide. School Board Member Dee Crumpler asked the Superintendent to share the many variables that impact the schools that rezoning would not address. Superintendent Montford noted that transportation itself was an issue. The school district presently travels about 3 ½ million miles a year on our buses, and that if student population is shifted throughout the schools it will have an impact on transportation and an impact on traffic (another good reason for everyone to be at the same table as these issues are discussed). Also, under the No Child Left Behind/Adequate Yearly Progress Federal Regulations, students from those schools that do not meet adequate yearly progress automatically have the option of moving to another school. He stated that previously it was a matter of redrawing the lines and students were forced to stay within the zones, now, by law, the opposite is true as we must give them an opportunity at attend another school.

Commissioner Mustian asked if there were plans for future schools as noted that it would be helpful as plans are made. Superintendent Montford called on Paul Byrd, Director of Facilities and Operations, to address the question. Mr. Byrd stated that as required by law, every five years the school system was required by law to update the school plant survey which makes to recommendations for capacity and comparability issues, etc. He noted that the school plant survey was due by the end of June, but that a request was going to be made that the current school plant survey stay intact until October 1 because the Class Size Amendment has had a significant impact on the capacities of our schools and DOE has just assigned official capacities so that the capacity needs can be ascertained countywide. He noted that any recommendations for new schools and their locations will be brought to the Board by October 1. The School Plant Survey will be good for five (5) years.

2. Population shifts and neighborhoods. Superintendent Montford suggested that the group continue the discussion and now focus on the issue of population shifts and neighborhoods and specifically what the projections are for school-age children. Commissioner Lightsey noted that the handouts indicated that specific recommendations for statutory and administrative rule revisions are due by December 1, 2005 (from the School Concurrency Task Force). She noted that in the interim there may not be a great deal that staff can do until we see what is going to be considered appropriate mechanisms and fee schedules, etc., by the State. She asked if someone could put together a timeline to show when guidelines would be forthcoming from the state and when action was due so that everyone could get up to speed in the interim and a time crunch could be avoided later on, so that no deadlines are missed. Superintendent Montford stated that the staffs could provide that timeline. An overview was presented regarding the Tallahassee-Leon County Planning Department's publication on Quarterly Economic and Demographic Report for Tallahassee and Leon County. The report shows the population growth of the county from 2000 to 2004, which is estimated as 24,444 net new residents. Using established methodologies, looking at new residential construction, socioeconomic shifts since 2000, etc., the population growth was allocated into the 48 census tracts around Leon County as an estimate of where the new residents are. The official locations will be determined when the 2010 census is completed, but this gives planners a good idea of where the population has grown since the 2000 census. Commissioner Ratcliff noted that the information presented regarding census was interesting but that it did not give information regarding the demand for schools. He asked if there was an expectation for a large increase in school age children in the next 20 years or so. Superintendent Montford stated that the LCS projection for 2010 is an increase of about 1,200 students and by 2015 up to 3,000 over today. Commissioner Ratcliff stated that this information suggest to him the need for a strategy to make sure that where the growth occurs is where the school with extra capacity and good infrastructure, like sidewalks, etc., are located. Commissioner Gillum asked if there were a list of schools planned for the future. Paul Byrd noted that a workshop on the proposed 5-year plan was recently held for the School Board and that several options were presented at that time. He reiterated the need to coordinate with the City and County on future plans. He noted that there were several options for the Board to consider and that they had some tough decisions to make. Mr. Byrd also noted shifting school zones was not the simple answer that it might seem to be. He explained that there were standard changes that affect the core facilities that exist now. Examples he shared included lunchrooms being too small, guidance areas too small, administration area too small, media center too small, etc. The students can be placed at the schools but everything that's there must be upgraded.

There are a multitude of issues to confront in order to do the upgrades, including storm water issues, etc. When the Class Size Reduction Amendment is considered, not that many of our schools are under capacity he stated. Also, if and when the Pre-K piece is added into the school capacities, there will be whole new game. Commissioner Lightsey stated that the commissioners need to try to understand the situation with the school system in not only how far over or under they are at various schools, but also what the projections are and where they are, so that it could all be coordinated with the City and County's infrastructure provision so that when new development comes along it can be fully served. In an ideal world we can direct growth by providing the infrastructure where we want it to be. She asked if the City, County and School Board's planning sections could get together and tell us how we might possibly achieve that. She stated that the City and County Planning Department people would be bringing back a series of recommendations to the City and County based on their phased infrastructure plan which says this is how we're going to serve the areas inside the existing urban services area. She stated that the School Board needed to also receive a copy of the eventual plan adopted by the City and County. She explained that this plan includes roads, water, sewer, etc., and that the school concurrency now has to be an iatrical part of that. Board Member Joy Bowen stated that she looks forward to receiving this information, particularly if it will be looking at the inner-city schools. Commissioner DePuy asked for a school-by-school analysis of enrollment at the schools versus capacity, especially as it regards future expansion of the urban core. Superintendent Montford stated that the information was available and that the planning departments probably already had it, but that it would be made available to the commissioners. Commissioner Lightsey stated that the State Legislature was now forcing the City, County and School Board to do what it needed to do a long time ago, but that it was not going to be an easy transition. She stated that will school concurrency there will be prices to pay and that the citizens, builders and developers would have to understand. Commissioner Winchester asked about the County partnering with the School Board regarding the proposed Northwest Park at the intersection of Fred George Road and Mission Road. He asked how significant the partnering with the City and the County was and how important a park in that area would be to the children at Springwood Elementary and that area. Superintendent Montford stated that the School Board has enjoyed a long history of partnering with the City and the County regarding parks. Superintendent Montford said that regarding the issue presented on the availability of school playgrounds and recreational facilities for public use, that it has been the practice to always make the grounds available. He stated that if a question arises, to contract him and he would find out what the issue was and address it.

D. AGENDA ITEMS ADDRESSED BY INTERLOCAL SCHOOL PLANNING AGREEMENT.

3. After school program alternative. Mayor Marks asked that this subject be addressed at this time. He stated the City has been working with the Parks and Recreation Department, the Neighborhood Service Department, Planning Department, Police Department and the schools to determine what was available for children. It was determined that about 73% of the neighborhoods are already within ½ mile of a park or playground (this includes the schools). He stated that the final report on the availability of recreation facilities would be available soon. Mayor Marks stated that in community we are doing a pretty good job in terms of taking care of, or attempting to take care of, our kids and making sure that they have some place to play.

Commissioner Grippa recommended that a subcommittee be formed to start looking at where growth can be moved, with the schools in mind. He recommended that development on the south side be made easier and that infrastructure be put in on the south side. Superintendent Montford took this opportunity to thank the City and County for their help with the New Elementary School "K". Commissioner Ratcliff pointed out that there are three new or nearly new laws that all three bodies need to grapple with in a very coordinated way; the class size amendment, the Pre-K Program and the new growth management law. He suggested that staff members from each body get together to do an analysis of the impact and what the expectations are that are built into these laws. Superintendent Montford noted that the staff would get together and do a "white paper" regarding the impact of legislation that is coming down and what we are facing. Mayor Marks suggested that the group meet more than once a year.

Board Member Crumpler noted that after school programs were one of the School Board's top three priorities this year. He explained that 21st Century Grants have helped pay for the programs, however the grant was reduced, this month, by 20% and over the next three years those grants will be reduced to zero. He stated that it will have a significant impact on the community and there needs to be a joint effort to keep these programs running. He also talked about the need to keep students in a close proximity to the homes in order to reduce the flow of traffic. He noted that issues that would be affected included crime, insurance, traffic, etc. He stated that we are doing a good job in the community but that we have to do a better job, specifically with those programs.

Commissioner Gillum commented that perhaps the group needed to produce a work list and work in committees with representatives from the City, County and School Board so that when the group comes together there could be some action items and the group could move in a direction. He also spoke about the need for productive activities for young people. He stated that he would be asking his commission to support the Boys and Girls Club. Commissioner Winchester spoke about the need for coordination on after school programs and the needs of the children with existing and future parks.

Commissioner Lightsey noted that she did not have an understanding of the federal dollars that come to the school district to fund after school programs. She suggested that a report on how the money is determined for the district would be helpful as potential sources of funding are explored. She agreed that ongoing contact between the three bodies would be helpful. Superintendent Montford suggested that the staffs get together to determine which issues we need to present a "white paper" on to the body so that at the next meeting some recommendations could be presented for the body's consideration. At that time each body could decide which member would work which issue.

Board Member Costigan stated that it was not so much the land for parks that is needed as it is the sustainable programs. She noted that the federal government is putting their money into reading programs and will stop funding the grants for the after school programs. She stated that some serious partnerships needed to be formed. Superintendent Montford added that we are also taking about before school programs. He stated that the school system simply does not have the funding to staff school from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

4. Continued coordination for school traffic. Board Member Crumpler spoke about the growth issue around the Buck Lake area and the impact it has had on the school. He mentioned the need for sidewalks and noted that it all goes back to the issues already talked about and that the groups need to do a better job of coordinating their efforts. It was noted that the Buck Lake area development was vested in the 10 Year Comp Plan. Commissioner Mustian discussed the list of potential sidewalks in school areas presented to the CRTPA (MPO) and asked that the list be prioritized. Commissioner Lightsey noted that Falls Chase is a vested development that will be coming back and that it will have a huge impact on the area.

6. Update on Oversight committee. Superintendent Montford noted that a recommendation from each body was needed for a citizen to serve on an oversight committee. He asked that the names be submitted to his office before the end of June.

Superintendent Montford noted that there were five other items that the group would not have time to get to due to a graduation that begins at 7:00 p.m.

Commissioner Sauls asked for a brief update as to where we are on the Concord and Ft. Braden issue. Superintendent Montford noted that his staff was preparing a list of properties that the school system owns that may or may not be available for gifts, trade or for sale, but that there are some legal ramifications or constraints that the district may have. He stated that the School Board would be looking at the list and making determinations for the future. Commissioner Sauls noted that the County has a lot of money invested in Ft. Braden and that they really want the ownership of that building and not just a continued lease if at all possible. It was suggested that staff from the three bodies get together and come up with a plan by September for accomplishing the issues and addressing the equity issue with the school system.

Superintendent Montford stated that the issues that remain would require quite a bit of discussion: the downtown school item refers to the Bloxham Building (the old Caroline Brevard School) and where we are as a community and the three bodies working together; the crossing guard issue; and the issue of a new high school. He asked if the members had received a copy of the letter from Commissioner Proctor relative to his support for a new high school on the south side. It was decided that when staffs get together to determine the key issues that need to be addressed the next time the body meets, the remaining issues from this meeting could be put on that list if they are determined to be key issues. Commissioner Thael recommended that staff look at the three issues to come to the next meeting and bring some proposals that can be voted on. He also mentioned Blueprint 2000 and recommended collaboration regarding the flooding in the parking area at Leon High School. Board Member Costigan noted that reports on some of the issues discussed are already available and suggested that the bodies share the reports. Commissioner Gillum suggested an agenda item regarding the crossing guard issue at the next meeting. Mayor Marks noted that the body was not a body that voted on issues. Commissioner Thael agreed and stated that it would be more of getting a sense of how each local government so that action can be taken by the City Commission, County Commission and School Board. Commissioner Lightsey noted that items for the City's budget, such as the crossing guard issue, needed to be in the budget which is being worked on at the present time.

Superintendent Montford recommended that staff pull together a detailed set of minutes of the meeting and some suggestions regarding any time-sensitive issues that each body would need to address during this calendar year.

There being no further business to come before the Boards, the meeting adjourned at 6:54 p.m.

APPROVED: _____
Cliff Thael
Chairman

ATTEST:

Bob Inzer
Clerk of the Circuit Court